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# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
Division of Oil, Gas & Mining

ROBERT L. MORGAN  
Executive Director

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Division Director

Supervisor 

## Inspection Report Minerals Regulatory Program Report Date: October 27, 2004

**Mine Name:** Asphalt Ridge  
**Operator or Permittee Name:**  
Uintah County  
**Permittee Mailing Address:**  
1489 E. 335 S., Vernal, UT 84078

**Inspector(s):** Paul Baker

**Other Participants:** Paul Feltch, two other county employees, and Kim McDonald

**Permit Status:** Active

**Current Acreages:**

**Total Permitted (Bonded):** 44

**Total Disturbed:** 44

**Permit number:** M/047/022

**Inspection Date:** October 26, 2004

**Weather:** Partly cloudy, 50's

**Inspection Start Time:** 10:30 AM

**Inspection End Time:** 12:30 PM

**Site location/Area Inspected (i.e. Pit #):**

The northwest portion of the area

**Surface Ownership:** SITLA and Fee

**Mineral Ownership:** Fee

**Mineral Mined:** Tar Sand

**Type of Mine:** Surface

Elements of Inspection	Evaluated	N/A	Comment	Enforcement
1. Permits, Revisions, Transfer, Bonds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Public Safety (open shafts, adits, trash, signs, highwalls)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Protection of Drainages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Explosives, magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Deleterious Material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Roads (maintenance, surfacing, dust control, safety)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Concurrent Reclamation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Erosion Control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Demolition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Backfilling and Grading (trenches, pits, roads, highwalls, shafts, drill holes)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Water Impoundments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Revegetation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Purpose of Inspection:**

The operator asked that I come and look at some areas they are planning to reclaim.

**Inspection Summary:**

7. Concurrent reclamation

Rule R647-4-107.6 requires that during operations, disturbed areas be reclaimed when no longer needed, except to the extent necessary to preserve evidence of mineralization for proof of discovery. If the operator no longer intends to mine at the Asphalt Ridge Mine, the site needs to be reclaimed or the notice of intention needs to be transferred to another operator that can post adequate bond.

10. Backfilling and Grading

Most of our discussion focused on backfilling and grading. The primary concern was regrading of the area shown across the middle of Photo 2. The area should be smoothed to a more natural contour, but rock outcrops do not need to be graded. The surface should then be ripped prior to applying soil. Soil would be brought in scrapers from the area circled in Photo 1 and applied at a thickness of about one foot.

The area in the foreground of Photo 2—the area where we were standing as we discussed some of the grading—has some loose material but is probably underlain by bedrock. It should be possible to grade some of this material down over a dug road that leads up the hill, and to generally shape this area to blend with the surrounding topography. The soil in this area appeared to be clayey, so it might be desirable to cover it with a few inches of a better soil.

The material in the center of Photo 3 will need to be graded to a more moderate slope—especially on the south side—and to make it blend with nearby areas. Soil could then be brought by scrapers to cover this material so it could be revegetated. To the west, there is a drainage in the undisturbed area, and I marked an area in Photo 3 where this drainage would naturally come across the disturbed area. The operator should keep this as a channel, and we discussed putting large rocks and possibly some drop structures in this channel.

We did not talk much about controlling runoff and sediment, but it will probably be necessary for the operator to install a sediment pond. There is a depression right above the processing plant where the pond might be placed.

We talked about the stepped highwall shown in Photo 4 and decided it could remain as it is. Just to the north of this highwall is an area with what appears to be some fairly loose soil (circled in Photo 3). It appears this material could be graded down the slope to make it more stable and suitable for revegetation.

At the base of the stepped highwall is a flat area that needs some work. I understand there is rock under part of the area, and part has good vegetation growth. The remainder of the area should be roughened and seeded. If tests indicate the soil in this area is not conducive to plant growth, it may be necessary to bring in some soil from the pile near the flare stack.

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A few general guidelines:

1. Seeding should be done in the fall as soon after surface preparation as possible. If an area is graded more than a few days before it can be seeded, the surface will need to be prepared again.
2. The surface should be left as rough as reasonably possible, and rocks on the surface increase water infiltration and plant growth and decrease erosion.
3. I recommend that the operator take samples from any of the soils to be used as growth media. The samples should be analyzed for texture, electrical conductivity, and sodium adsorption ratio. If some of the results are bad, it may be possible to use stockpiled material to cover some of the worst material, even if only a few inches deep.
4. The operator should not purchase more seed than they plan to use in a season.

**Inspector's Signature**



**Date: October 28, 2004**

PBB:jb

Enclosures. Photo attachment

cc: Paul Felch, Uintah County

Will Stokes, SITLA

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**ATTACHMENT**  
**Photographs**  
**M/037/022, Asphalt Ridge Mine, Uintah County**  
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**Photo 1. The circled area contains material that was apparently graded down from areas closer to the foreground.**



**Photo 2. The area in the center of this photo has some rock outcrops, but, as far as possible, it needs to be graded to blend with surrounding topography.**





**Photo 3.** The area near the center of this photo is a highwall that was reclaimed several years ago. No grading should be needed in this area.



**Photo 4.** Marked are areas where a channel could be placed (left) and where some loose material could be graded to make a more stable slope.